

oceans—which cover 71 percent of the Earth's surface and are key to the life support system for all creatures on our planet.

Following the National Ocean Conference, I introduced the Oceans Act with several of my colleagues. This bipartisan bill, which was signed into law by the President on August 8, 2000, will create a national Oceans Commission to bring together ocean and coastal experts, policy makers, environmental groups, and industry representatives to take a comprehensive look at our nation's ocean and coastal policies. In constant dollars, Federal expenditures for ocean activities are about one-third of what they were thirty years ago, when Congress convened a similar commission that led to the creation of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

This summer I co-chaired the Oceans Policy Conference, to move beyond crisis management to a policy that balances conservation and development, with the guiding principles of sustainability. It is vital that the United States take the leadership in ensuring that the oceans are protected so that the ocean benefits we enjoy today will be available for future generations. Sound science and careful exploration will lay the groundwork for sustainable use of existing ocean resources and future untapped reserves.

The bill before us today, the Exploration of the Seas Act, builds on the foundation laid by my previous initiatives and those of other Members to raise global awareness of the importance of our oceans. For example, gas hydrates found in seabed floor deposits may be the energy source of the future to replace traditional fossil fuels. Half of the pharmaceuticals under development to treat cancer are derived from marine species. These two examples alone adequately illustrate that now is the time to explore the poorly understood resources of the oceans, so we may be prepared to wisely manage them in the future.

We know more about the surface of the moon than the bottom of the oceans. H.R. 2090 remedies this situation by making an important step towards discovering the unknown treasures hidden below the surface of the ocean.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. QUINN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2090, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1515

RED RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ACT

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4318) to establish the Red River National Wildlife Refuge, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4318

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Red River National Wildlife Refuge Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) The area of Louisiana known as the Red River Valley, located along the Red River Waterway in Caddo, Bossier, Red River, Natchitoches, and De Soto Parishes, is of critical importance to over 350 species of birds (including migratory and resident waterfowl, shore birds, and neotropical migratory birds), aquatic life, and a wide array of other species associated with river basin ecosystems.

(2) The bottomland hardwood forests of the Red River Valley have been almost totally cleared. Reforestation and restoration of native habitat will benefit a host of species.

(3) The Red River Valley is part of a major continental migration corridor for migratory birds funneling through the mid continent from as far north as the Arctic Circle and as far south as South America.

(4) There are no significant public sanctuaries for over 300 river miles on this important migration corridor, and no significant Federal, State, or private wildlife sanctuaries along the Red River north of Alexandria, Louisiana.

(5) Completion of the lock and dam system associated with the Red River Waterway project up to Shreveport, Louisiana, has enhanced opportunities for management of fish and wildlife.

(6) The Red River Valley offers extraordinary recreational, research, and educational opportunities for students, scientists, bird watchers, wildlife observers, hunters, anglers, trappers, hikers, and nature photographers.

(7) The Red River Valley is an internationally significant environmental resource that has been neglected and requires active restoration and management to protect and enhance the value of the region as a habitat for fish and wildlife.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSES OF REFUGE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish the Red River National Wildlife Refuge, consisting of approximately 50,000 acres of Federal lands, waters, and interests therein within the boundaries depicted upon the map entitled "Red River National Wildlife Refuge—Selection Area", dated September 5, 2000.

(2) BOUNDARY REVISIONS.—The Secretary shall make such minor revisions of the boundaries of the Refuge as may be appropriate to carry out the purposes of the Refuge or to facilitate the acquisition of property within the Refuge.

(3) AVAILABILITY OF MAP.—The Secretary shall keep the map referred to in paragraph (1) available for inspection in appropriate offices of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Refuge are the following:

(1) To provide for the restoration and conservation of native plants and animal communities on suitable sites in the Red River basin, including restoration of extirpated species.

(2) To provide habitat for migratory birds.

(3) To provide technical assistance to private land owners in the restoration of their lands for the benefit of fish and wildlife.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The establishment of the Refuge under paragraph (1) of subsection (a) shall take effect on the date the Sec-

retary publishes, in the Federal Register and publications of local circulation in the vicinity of the area within the boundaries referred to in that paragraph, a notice that sufficient property has been acquired by the United States within those boundaries to constitute an area that can be efficiently managed as a National Wildlife Refuge.

SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATION OF REFUGE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer all lands, waters, and interests therein acquired under section 5 in accordance with—

(1) the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd et seq.) and the Act of September 28, 1962 (76 Stat. 653; 16 U.S.C. 460k et seq.; commonly known as the Refuge Recreation Act);

(2) the purposes of the Refuge set forth in section 3(b); and

(3) the management plan issued under subsection (b).

(b) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the establishment of the Refuge, the Secretary shall issue a management plan for the Refuge.

(2) CONTENTS.—The management plan shall include provisions that provide for the following:

(A) Planning and design of trails and access points.

(B) Planning of wildlife and habitat restoration, including reforestation.

(C) Permanent exhibits and facilities and regular educational programs throughout the Refuge.

(D) Ensuring that compatible hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation are the priority general public uses of the Refuge, in accordance with section 4(a)(3) and (4) of the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668ee(a)(3), (4)).

(3) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall provide an opportunity for public participation in developing the management plan.

(B) LOCAL VIEWS.—The Secretary shall give special consideration to views by local public and private entities and individuals in developing the management plan.

(C) WILDLIFE INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION CENTER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall construct, administer, and maintain, at an appropriate site within the Refuge, a wildlife interpretation and education center.

(2) PURPOSES.—The center shall be designed and operated—

(A) to promote environmental education; and

(B) to provide an opportunity for the study and enjoyment of wildlife in its natural habitat.

(d) ASSISTANCE TO RED RIVER WATERWAY COMMISSION.—The Secretary shall provide to the Red River Waterway Commission—

(1) technical assistance in monitoring water quality, noxious plants, and exotic organisms, and in preventing siltation of prime fisheries habitat; and

(2) where appropriate and available, fish for stocking.

SEC. 5. ACQUISITION OF LANDS, WATERS, AND INTERESTS THEREIN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may acquire up to 50,000 acres of lands, waters, or interests therein within the boundaries of the Refuge described in section 3(a)(1).

(b) INCLUSION IN REFUGE.—Any lands, waters, or interests acquired by the Secretary under this section shall be part of the Refuge.